

**Executive Committee for Highway Safety
Keeping Drivers Alert
Working Group Meeting Minutes – Mtg. #14
March 10, 2006**

Location:

UNC HSRC, Chapel Hill @ 10:00 a.m.

Committee Members in Attendance:

Tom Crosby

Arthur Goodwin

Don Ferrier

Katy Jones

Delisa Davis

Scribe:

Katy Jones

Minutes:

- The meeting began at approximately 10:10 a.m.

Task I – Finalization of Campaign

Katy Jones gave a brief overview of the GHSP concept statement drafted for the teen distracted driving campaign (See enclosed). The main component to the strategy includes the development of a peer-to-peer educational program that includes the voice of North Carolina teens.

The *Driven 4 Livin'* campaign will promote the positive benefits of attentive driving and will integrate the stories of real teens from across the state. The campaign elements will be developed and distributed leading up to *Driven 4 Livin'* Day. The day, established in conjunction with the Governor, will take place in the last few weeks before summer vacation.

The next step in this process is budget development. Katy Jones will discuss and investigate the options for HSRC's involvement in the development of the campaign pieces and NCDOT's role in the execution of the campaign.

Task II – Discussion of Drowsy Driving Strategy

The text drafted for inclusion into the DMV Manual regarding drowsy and distracted driving was reviewed by the Working Group (see enclosed). In addition to being sent to DMV, this text will also be supplied to the Department of Public Instruction for inclusion into the Drivers Education Guidelines.

Reminders

- The next Executive Committee for Highway Safety meeting will be held on April 25, 2006.

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, April 13, 2006, 10-12 at HSRC

North Carolina Governor's Highway Safety Program Concept Statement – Form GHSP-01

| APPLICANT AGENCY INFORMATION | | |
|--|----------------|---|
| 1. Agency: NC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR HIGHWAY SAFETY | | 2. Date: MARCH 13, 2006 |
| 3. Address: 6600 AAA Drive | | 4. Contact: Tom Crosby, Working Group Chair |
| 5. City: Charlotte | | 6. Phone: (704) 569-7733 |
| 7. County: Mecklenburg | | 8. Fax: (704) 569-7815 |
| 9. State: NC | 10. Zip: 28212 | 11. Email: trcrosby@mailaaa.com |

**Project Title: Increasing Awareness of the Danger of Distracted Driving
Among Teens**

1. Is this concept ☒ New? ☐ Continuation from last year?
- Years of Prior Funding (within the past five years): ☒ 0 ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 3+
- Prior Projects with GHSP (include prior project numbers):
2. Problem Identification (Include data): *(See attached page)*
3. Proposed Solution (List goals and objectives): *(See attached page)*
4. Personnel Needs (Itemize costs): Labor and Fringe Benefits Costs: \$00000
5. Equipment Needs (Itemize costs): None
6. Additional Needs (Itemize costs): Project Supplies and Photocopies: \$, Communication: \$, In-state Travel: \$, Consultant Fees: \$, Mini-grants: \$ and UNC Facilities and Administrative Costs (F&A): \$

| BUDGET INFORMATION | | | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|---------------|--------|-------------------|--------|
| | Total Amount | Federal Funds | | State/Local Funds | |
| | | % | Amount | % | Amount |
| Personnel Costs | \$0 | 100 | \$0 | | \$ |
| Equipment Costs | \$0 | 100 | \$0 | | \$ |
| Additional Costs | \$0 | 100 | \$0 | | \$ |
| Total Project Costs | \$0 | | \$0 | | \$ |

| FOR GHSP USE ONLY | |
|--|---|
| Crash Ranking: _____ of _____ | Alcohol Crash Ranking: _____ of _____ |
| GMS: <input type="checkbox"/> GB <input type="checkbox"/> FH <input type="checkbox"/> TH <input type="checkbox"/> CL <input type="checkbox"/> JM | Contract: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Revisit |

Problem Identification

According to the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, an estimated 1.5 to 3.0 million crashes occur annually as a result of distracted drivers. Multi-tasking while driving has become ingrained into American culture, causing drivers to at times focus their attention on everything but the road ahead.

In the U.S., teens account for 14.3 percent of motor-vehicle crashes but only 6.4 percent of the driving population. In 2002, North Carolina experienced 21,082 distraction-related crashes with 293 of them being fatal crashes, and drivers aged 16 to 21 accounted for 14 percent of the total.

NHTSA data shows that drivers aged 16 to 20 are four times as likely to be involved in a distraction related crash. Some of the most common distractions among young drivers include driving and/or riding with friends, eating, reading, drinking, changing a CD, tuning the radio, talking on the phone, applying makeup, yelling out the window, reaching in the backseat and looking at something or someone outside while driving. Given that young drivers are at a greater risk for being involved in a crash, there is a need to reduce these types of distracting, dangerous behaviors.

Proposed Solution

The overarching goal of the project is to engage North Carolina's teen drivers in the issue of distracted driving through the establishment of a multifaceted educational campaign called *Driven 4 Livin'*. In focus groups conducted by the Keeping Drivers Alert working group, teens stressed the importance of a proactive message with a local angle that allows them to speak, as opposed to being spoken to. The *Driven 4 Livin'* campaign will promote the positive benefits of attentive driving and will integrate the stories of real teens from across the state.

The campaign elements will be developed and distributed leading up to *Driven 4 Livin'* Day. The day, established in conjunction with the Governor, will take place in the last few weeks before summer vacation. Given that there is an increase in teen crashes during the summer months, it will be important to build this awareness leading up to that time period.

While the target audience of this campaign is NC's teen drivers, the importance of parental involvement cannot be ignored. According to a National Institute of Health study, teens are much more likely to drive safely when their parents restricted their driving and monitored their whereabouts. To encourage parental involvement, the campaign will include a strong earned media component to target parents of teen drivers.

Through a partnership with the UNC School of Journalism and Mass Communication, many of the campaign elements such as logo and key messages have been developed (see attached). The students worked to develop these items and campaign elements to appeal to the target audience of teen drivers. While these elements will need to be enhanced, a large part of the creative development for the campaign has been completed.

Goal 1: Develop a peer-to-peer educational program that includes the voice of North Carolina teens

Objective 1 – Develop an educational video for distribution to NC high schools that includes teen drivers from across the state.

Objective 2 – Develop a series of radio public service announcements featuring the stories of teens involved in a distraction-related crash.

Objective 3 – Establish a contest to gather teen ideas on how to address the problem, with the most creative and innovative idea winning a \$500 prize.

Objective 4 – Launch initial campaign in three NC counties, including Wake County, an eastern county and a western county.

Goal 2: Establish a statewide awareness day called Drivin' 4 Livin' Day

Objective 1 – Work in conjunction with the Governor to build additional publicity for the issue.

Objective 2 – Coordinate additional student activities during the week with groups such as Honor Society and SADD.

Goal 3: Incorporate an earned media component to build awareness beyond the program elements

Objective 1 – Pitch stories to media across the state on distraction and teen driver stories.

Objective 2 – Work with major media outlets to develop and disseminate public service announcements on distracted driving among teens.

Objective 3 – Submit op-ed pieces to local newspapers across the state.

Goal 4: Conduct evaluation component of the educational campaign

Objective 1 – Conduct pre- and post surveys to gauge awareness of the issue among teens.

Objective 2 – Conduct pre- and post analysis on the issue of distracted driving among teens in the media.

Objective 3 – Prepare final project report for GHSP documenting the project's accomplishments.

Drowsy Driving

Driving while drowsy is a silent killer. More than 1,550 highway deaths are estimated to occur annually because of drowsy driving, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Fatigue affects all of us; no one is invincible. However, some motorists are more prone to drive drowsy.

Who is at risk?

- Sleep related crashes are most common in **young people** - especially men, who can feel they can push themselves harder.
- **Adults with young children**, especially new mothers, often have not had a full night's sleep, which could lead to drowsy driving any time of day.
- **Shift workers** are more likely than those who work a regular daytime schedule to drive to or from work drowsy at least a few days a month.
- **People with sleep disorders**, such as sleep apnea, narcolepsy and insomnia are also at greater risk for sleep-related crashes.

No matter if you are in one of the above categories or not, any one who has had less than five hours of sleep the night before is four to five times more likely to crash than someone who got a full eight hours of rest.

Additionally, someone who has gone without sleep for 24 hours has the same poor reactions as someone who is legally intoxicated.

Here are some tips to prevent drowsy driving:

- Get at least six hours of good sleep the night before a trip.
- Stop, pull over to a safe place and take a nap if you become sleepy while driving and are unable to switch drivers.
- Travel at times when you are normally awake. Our bodies want to rest between midnight and 6 a.m. and then again between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. Try to avoid being on the road at these times.
- Travel with an awake passenger who can keep a conversation going.
- Take a break every two hours or every 150 miles, sooner if you become sleepy. Taking a short walk or stretching will help increase the blood flow and help keep you awake.
- Drink a caffeinated beverage and wait about 30 minutes for it to enter the bloodstream. But remember, caffeine will help keep you awake but not always alert.

Distracted Driving

Being distracted from, or failing to give full attention to driving, can lead to poor choices when driving, resulting in serious consequences.

Types of Distractions

Some causes of distracted driving include eating, drinking, talking on a cell phone, writing, reading, smoking, changing your CDs or radio station, looking at people or objects outside your vehicle, looking for things inside your vehicle, talking to passengers, dealing with children or pets, applying makeup, shaving, etc. Distractions fall into three categories:

1. Physical – Distractions that cause the driver to take his or her hands off the wheel or eyes off the road such as tuning a radio or dialing a cell phone.
2. Mental – Activities that take the driver's mind off the road such as having a conversation or thinking about an emotional event.
3. Combination – Some activities take your hands, eyes and mind off the task at hand such as reading a map while driving.

Dealing with Distractions

No matter what the distraction, inattentive drivers exhibit similar behavior. Distractions cause drivers to react more slowly to traffic conditions or events, such as a car stopping to make a left turn or pulling out from a side road. Inattentive drivers fail more often to recognize potential hazards such as pedestrians or debris in the road. Also, distractions make it more difficult to conduct preventative or evasive moves to avoid a crash because many distractions force a driver to take at least one hand off the steering wheel. Below are ways to minimize in-vehicle distractions:

- Pre-program your favorite radio stations for easy access and make CDs easy to reach.
- Keep your stereo at a volume low enough so you can hear things outside of your vehicle such as a siren, horn honking, screeching of tires or others things that would lead you to react safely to an emergency or hazard.
- Designate a front-seat passenger to serve as a “co-pilot,” rather than fumble with maps or navigation systems. If you are driving alone, map out destinations in advance.
- Teach children the importance of good behavior while in a vehicle. Do not underestimate how distracting it can be to tend to them in the car.
- Do your personal grooming at home, not in the car.
- Pets should be in a carrier.

Dealing with Emotions

Emotions can have a great affect on safe driving. You may not be able to drive well if you are overly worried, excited, afraid or depressed. If you are angry or excited, give yourself time to cool off before driving.

Dealing with Cell Phones

Cellular telephones can be a lifesaver in an emergency. However, they also can be distracting. Below are some tips to help you avoid letting the cell phone become a deadly distraction for you:

- Use your cell phone only if it is absolutely necessary.
- If you must use your phone, do so at a safe time and place.
- Ask a passenger in the car to place the call for you, and, if possible, speak in your place.
- Don't feel like you must answer the phone when it rings. Let someone leave a message and you can return the call when stopped at a safe location.
- Secure your phone in the car so that it does not become a projectile in a crash.